



AGENDA & NOTICE

LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY
NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2025, 6:30 PM

Meeting Location: County of Los Angeles Hall of Administration
Sybil Brand Room 372
500 W. Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

To Provide Public Comment: You may submit written public comment via email to contact@lanaic.lacounty.gov. Please note "LANAIC Public Comment" in the subject line. Please submit your public comment or documentation as soon as possible, but no later than 5 p.m. the night before the scheduled meeting. Public comment received after this time will be added to the next regular Commission meeting.

SHAWN IMITATES DOG, Chairperson
Lakota

MARK VILLASEÑOR, Vice Chairperson
Fernandeño Tataviam

BRYCE LEWIS-SMITH, Secretary
Citizen Potawatomi Nation

DENISE ESCOTO, Treasurer
Northern Cheyenne

CAROLINE BHALLA, Commissioner
Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin

CHRISIE CASTRO, Commissioner
Navajo

ANDREA N. GARCIA, M.D., Commissioner
Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara

VIVIAN GARCIA, Commissioner
Cherokee

DAWN JACKSON, Commissioner
Saginaw Chippewa

MONA MORALES RECALDE, Commissioner
Gabrieleno Tongva

JOHN ONLY A CHIEF, Commissioner
Pawnee Nation

RUDY ORTEGA JR., Commissioner
Fernandeño Tataviam

TED TENORIO, Commissioner
Tiguan Nation

RICH TOYON, Commissioner
Acjachemen

RENE WILLIAMS, Commissioner
Colville Tribes

ALEXANDRA VALDES
Executive Director
Tlingit/Athabaskan

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. INVOCATION & LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

3. ROLL CALL

4. COMMISSIONER INTRODUCTIONS

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

6. ACTION ITEMS

- 6.1. Adopt Absentee Excuses
- 6.2. Adopt the October 21, 2025, Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) Unapproved Meeting Minutes
- 6.3. Select CY2026-2027 LANAIC Executive Committee
- 6.4. Adopt the Draft LA City/County Native American Indian Commission FY24-25 Annual Report

- 6.5. Adopt the draft letter to LA City Mayor Karen Bass encouraging her appointment of a Native American leader to the LADWP Board vacancy
- 6.6 Reappoint Commissioner Rene' Williams to serve on the LA Continuum of Care (LA CoC) Board
- 6.7 Adopt the draft letters to Board of Supervisors and Mayor Karen Bass uplifting AIAN community housing and homelessness needs
- 6.8 Approve the co-branding of the LA County AIAN Homelessness Dashboard release materials, including a quote from Chair Shawn Imitates Dog.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 7.1 Discuss AIAN Homelessness in LA County
- 7.2 Discuss Impacts of Federal Administration on LA County's AIAN Community
- 7.3 Discuss LA City Parks Needs Assessment Steering Committee Updates
- 7.4 Debrief 2025 Native American Heritage Month Events at LA City Hall
- 7.5 Discuss FY26-27 LANAIC Budget Priorities

8. CHAIR'S REPORT

- 8.1 General Updates

9. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- 9.1 General Updates

10. COMMITTEE & AD-HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 10.1 Executive Committee
- 10.2 Self Governance Board
- 10.3 2025 Native American Heritage Month Ad Hoc Committee
- 10.4 LANAIC Bylaws Ad Hoc Committee

11. COMMISSIONER GENERAL COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

13. COMMISSION ADJOURNMENT

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 20, 2026, from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

Location: Hall of Administration, Room 372, 500 W. Temple Street, LA, CA 90012

Meetings are held in English. If interpretation in other languages or accommodations for persons with disabilities are needed, please contact the Commission at 213-738-3241 at least 3 business days before the meeting. The meetings of the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Contact: www.lanaic.lacounty.gov, contact@lanaic.lacounty.gov, or (213) 738-3241

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink on a light yellow background. The signature reads "Shawn Imitates Dog" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chairperson Shawn Imitates Dog



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 21, 2025

The October 21, 2025, Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian (LANAIC) meeting was at the County of Los Angeles Hall of Administration, Sybil Brand Room 372, 500 W. Temple Street, Los Angeles, California, 90012.

Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

Vice Chairperson Mark Villasenor called the meeting to order at 6:31 P.M. and read the Los Angeles County Land Acknowledgment.

Invocation

No invocation was provided during the meeting.

Roll Call

Present: Vice Chairperson Mark Villasenor
Secretary Bryce Lewis-Smith
Treasurer Denise Escoto (left at 7:10 p.m.)
Dr. Andrea Garcia
Vivian Garcia
Dawn Jackson
Mona Morales Recalde
Rudy Ortega Jr. (arrived at 6:57 p.m.)
Rich Toyon
Rene' William

Absent: Chairperson Shawn Imitates Dog (Excused)
Caroline Bhalla (Excused)
Chrissie Castro (Excused)
John Only A Chief (Excused)
Ted Tenorio (Excused)

Staff: Alexandra Valdes, LANAIC Executive Director
Megan Moret, Department of Arts & Culture Board Liaison and Special Assistant
Julien Tan, LANAIC Administrative Manager

Quorum was met.

Commissioner Introductions

Commissioners provided brief introductions, including their names, appointing office, and tribal affiliation.



**LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION
UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 21, 2025**

Public Comment

A member of the public, Teri Red Owl submitted the following public comment via email:

Manahuu (Hello). Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment at your October 21, 2025 meeting. The Owens Valley Indian Water Commission (OVIWC) hopes to make an in-person presentation to LANAIC at a future meeting. For now, we would like to let you know that with the LADWP Board of Commissioner's seat recently vacated by George McGraw that the OVIWC is making a push to have Mayor Karen Bass appoint a Native American to that seat. We are starting a letter writing campaign to Mayor Bass and will provide the LANAIC with a sample letter that we request you send to your contacts and colleagues urging Mayor Bass to fill this vacancy with a Native American.

I have included links to a Los Angeles Times article that appeared in the October 18, 2025 edition along with a video by LA Times writer Ian James. This article highlights some of our issues in Payahuunadü (Owens Valley) that we hope to present to the LANAIC at a future meeting.

Here is the article which appears on the front page of the LA Times on 10/18/25: <https://www.latimes.com/environment/story/2025-10-18/owens-valley-tribes-water>

And a short video: <https://www.latimes.com/00000199-eeb3-d2ee-a99b-eef7f7190000-123>

Manahobu (Thank you).

Teri Red Owl

A member of the public, Diego Zapata, spoke on Item 6.3 as a community activist and organizer of G.R.O.W. Lincoln Heights. He stated that Flat Top Rock has long been a part of the community and expressed his complete solidarity with the Gabrieleno Tongva. He implored the commissioners to adopt the letter and offered himself as a resource in any appropriate capacity. As a biologist, he emphasized the abundance of natural resources at Flat Top Rock. He also took a moment to honor Commissioner Mona Morales Recalde for her advocacy for the preservation of Flat Top Rock.



**LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION
UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 21, 2025**

Action Items

6.1 Adopt absentee excuses

A motion was made by Commissioner Rene’ Williams and seconded by Commissioner Rich Toyon for Chairperson Shawn Imitates Dog, Commissioner Caroline Bhalla, Commissioner Chrissie Castro, Commissioner John Only A Chief, and Commissioner Ted Tenorio’s absentee excuses for the October 21, 2025, meeting.

The motion passed.

YES	Villasenor, Lewis-Smith, Escoto, A. Garcia, V. Garcia, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Toyon, William
NO	
ABSTAIN	
ABSENT	Imitates Dog, Bhalla, Castro, Only A Chief, Tenorio, Ortega Jr.

6.2 Approve the August 19, 2025, Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) Unapproved Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Rich Toyon and seconded by Treasurer Denise Escoto to approve the unapproved August 19, 2025, LANAIC Meeting Minutes as presented.

The motion passed.

YES	Villasenor, Lewis-Smith, Escoto, A. Garcia, V. Garcia, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Toyon, William
NO	
ABSTAIN	
ABSENT	Imitates Dog, Bhalla, Castro, Only A Chief, Tenorio, Ortega Jr.



**LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION
UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 21, 2025**

6.3. Adopt the draft letter to the LA City Council requesting the Preservation of Flat Top Rock

A motion was made by Secretary Bryce Lewis-Smith and seconded by Commissioner Vivian Garcia to adopt the draft letter to the LA City Council requesting the Preservation of Flat Top Rock.

The motion passed. The letter is adopted as amended during the meeting.

YES	Villasenor, Lewis-Smith, Escoto, A. Garcia, V. Garcia, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Toyon, William
NO	
ABSTAIN	
ABSENT	Imitates Dog, Bhalla, Castro, Only A Chief, Tenorio, Ortega Jr.

6.4. Adopt the draft letter to LA City Council President Marqueece Harris-Dawson recommending that the LA City Council rename 3446 1st Street, Los Angeles, CA 90004 to "Ernest Stevens Sr. Square"

A motion was made by Commissioner Dr. Andrea Garcia and seconded by Commissioner Dawn Jackson to adopt the draft letter to LA City Council President Marqueece Harris-Dawson recommending that the LA City Council rename 3446 1st Street, Los Angeles, CA 90004 to "Ernest Stevens Sr. Square."

The motion passed.

YES	Villasenor, Lewis-Smith, Escoto, A. Garcia, V. Garcia, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Ortega Jr., Toyon, William
NO	
ABSTAIN	
ABSENT	Imitates Dog, Bhalla, Castro, Only A Chief, Tenorio

Discussion Items

7.1 Discuss AIAN Homelessness in LA County

Commissioner Dr. Andrea Garcia shared a report titled Native American Community Input on How to Move from Homelessness to Home in Los Angeles. The key takeaway from this two-page document is that there is strong desire for Native American cultural district is calling, tribal consultation, equity in data, policy, and resources, as well as meaningful representation. A diagram on the second page outlines the types of support that correspond to these asks.



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 21, 2025

While the language in the report still requires strengthening, Commissioner Garcia shared that it is nearing its final form. Commissioners are encouraged to read it, especially if they plan to engage in conversations with Supervisors or elected officials, as the report can serve as a valuable resource.

Additionally, Commissioner Dr. Garcia shared that she would like to circulate the two-page document, along with a previously shared video, in late October. This will be accompanied by an email reiterating key asks in anticipation of Native American Heritage Month. This late October action will serve as a preview for NAHAM and potentially aligning with the release of ARDI's AIAN Homelessness data dashboard. Ideally, the email and dashboard will help anchor the advocacy efforts.

Looking ahead to November, Commissioner Dr. Garcia plans to place a formal letter on the agenda to be sent to local leaders, offering briefings at their offices. She is more than willing to attend these briefings if requested. An initial email will be sent at the end of this month to begin that outreach.

Commissioner Mona Morales Recalde suggested adding language in the 2-pager regarding funding support for local tribes, She also recommended that any mention of Native organizations be expanded to include local tribes explicitly. Commissioner Dr. Andrea Garcia asked if anyone has visual design skills to assist with formatting or presentation of materials. She welcomes any support. The body agreed that all elected appointed members of the commission will send the drafted email with the updated 2 pager to their respective appointed offices and Cc Chair Shawn Imitates Dog, Commissioner Garcia and Alexandra.

7.2 Discuss Impacts of Federal Administration on LA County's AIAN Community

Treasurer Denise Escoto reported that, due to the ongoing Federal government shutdown, CalFRESH assistance may not be issued to recipients in November. She raised this concern during the SGB meeting earlier that day, asking whether there are resources available to support the community in the event of a disruption.

The SGB team responded with several thoughtful ideas to help address potential gaps in food assistance.

7.3 Discuss LA City Parks Needs Assessment Steering Committee Updates

Commissioner Rich Toyon reported that the current LA Park Needs Assessment closed on October 15. All public comments were submitted by that deadline, and a substantial number were received. The updated assessment will be released on November 18 and forwarded to the appropriate municipalities for discussion and potential adoption.

While most meetings have concluded, Commissioner Toyon shared that a tribal listening session is scheduled for November. The assessment process is a significant undertaking, and the team is currently reviewing and digesting the public feedback.



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 21, 2025

Alexandra suggested to Commissioner Toyon that Thompson with the Parks Needs Assessment team reach out to her to coordinate the LA City team's presence at the next commission meeting. Commissioner Toyon emphasized that having the team attend in person would be far more beneficial than participating via Zoom

7.4 Discuss FY 26-27 LANAIC Budget Priorities

Alexandra provided background on the Commission's budget letter process. She shared that this item is agendaized as a discussion to begin discussing what priorities might be included in a FY26-27 Budget Request Letter to the Board of Supervisors and Mayor Karen Bass. She shared about some items from previous letters that have yet to be funded including dedicated City staff to support the AIAN community and the LANAIC as well as dedicated staffing at the County to support addressing AIAN homelessness. Commissioner Dr. Andrea Garcia emphasized the importance of prioritizing staffing to support this work, particularly advocating for individuals who will oversee Native homelessness initiatives.

Alexandra also noted the upcoming move of the Department of Mental Health's American Indian Counseling Center into a new office space and the importance of ensuring that space is culturally resonate with Native communities. Commissioner Dr. Garcia shared that her Department of Mental Health office will be relocating next month, and if budget allows, funding could be used for culturally significant design elements. She suggested ideas such as framing photos from the County's Harms Report and installing a permanent land acknowledgment.

Commissioner Mona Morales Recalde added that LA County Parks has a compelling example of a land acknowledgment which could serve as inspiration.

Regarding funding, Commissioner Morales Recalde inquired whether the recommendations from the Harms Report had been incorporated into the current budget request. Alexandra responded that this moment presents an opportunity to amplify those recommendations. She noted that additional guidance may be available next month and emphasized the need to be strategic in advancing the Harms Report recommendations.

7.5 Discuss the Draft LA City/County Native American Indian Commission FY24-25 Annual Report

Alexandra reminded the Commission that one of its key responsibilities is to complete and adopt an annual report and that a draft version is included in the meeting packet. She shared that much of the content is carried over from previous years, and the document remains a working, evolving list of the Commission's accomplishments.

Commissioners are encouraged to review the draft and identify any missing items. Alexandra requested that recommendations and edits be submitted in writing. The finalized version will be placed on the November agenda for formal adoption.



**LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION
UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 21, 2025**

Presentations

8.1 Presentation on the County of Los Angeles American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) People Experiencing Homelessness Dashboard - Tolu A. Bamishigbin (Wuraola) (Principal Analyst, LA County Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative)

Los Angeles County Office of Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative (ARDI) Principal Analyst Tolu A. Bamishigbin (Wuraola) presented on the County of Los Angeles American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) People Experiencing Homelessness Dashboard.

Commissioner Rene' Williams asked whether ARDI is combining with other Continuum of Care (CoC) systems. Tolu responded that they were able to integrate with one other CoC—Long Beach. However, Pasadena and Glendale present challenges because they disaggregate racial data differently.

Tolu noted that Commissioner Dr. Andrea Garcia had expressed interest in understanding what AIAN (American Indian/Alaska Native) homelessness looks like across other CoCs. In response, the team will work to pull relevant data.

Tolu also shared that one challenge in presenting AIAN-specific data is the difficulty of obtaining precise figures due to small sample sizes. Despite this, she emphasized that AIAN data consistently reflects some of the most acute outcomes.

Alexandra, referencing the alarming nature of the data, stressed that it must be referenced in this year's budget request letters.

Commissioner Dr. Garcia proposed that meetings and communications should be released sooner to capitalize on the urgency of the moment.

Secretary Bryce Lewis-Smith identified a potential opportunity to elevate the issue to the state level by aligning with the California Climate Change Assessment. He suggested this could be a strategic avenue for broader impact.

Commissioner Dr. Garcia gave a heartfelt shoutout to Tolu for her persistence and consistency in compiling and advancing this important work.



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 21, 2025

Chair's Report

9.1 General Updates

This item was tabled until the November 18, 2025, meeting.

Executive Director's Report

10.1 General Updates

Alexandra provided updates on the website migration. Commissioners are asked to review the history section and suggest any new accomplishments from the annual report that should be added. Updated headshots and bios should be submitted by the end of October to Alexandra via email, A group photo would also be a welcome addition and Alexandra shared she would look into have a County photographer attend an upcoming Commission meeting.

Alexandra shared via email that the Tribal Consultation Policy project is off to a strong start. The team is expected to present at a Commission meeting in early 2026 to discuss high-level scope of work.

The County was contacted by the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians who requested that the County's Land Acknowledgment be updated to reflect their new official name, the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation. Additionally, additional tribes who supported the County developing the land acknowledgement toolkit had previously asked to be added to the land acknowledgement when it was updated next. Alexandra shared the Board of Supervisors plans to make these changes and she anticipates they will do soon via a Board Motion.

Alexandra shared that Supervisor Hilda Solis will recognize all NAHM honorees at the November 4, 2025 Board of Supervisors meeting.

Finally, Alexandra shared that the Commission must hold the 2026-2027 Executive Committee elections in November since the body does not have a meeting in December. Alexandra shared that she would be soliciting nominations via email and then providing commissioners an opportunity to remove their names from consideration before finalizing the nominations document for the November meeting.

Committee & Ad Hoc Committee Reports

11.1 Executive Committee

Secretary Bryce Lewis-Smith tabled the item.

11.2 Self Governance Board

Alexandra noted that updates were shared during the SGB meeting held earlier the same day. However, there have been no changes to the CSBG program since the August 2025 meeting.



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 21, 2025

11.3 2025 Native American Heritage Month Ad Hoc Committee

Secretary Bryce Lewis-Smith shared that the Native American Heritage Month event at the Bridge Gallery will take place on November 7, 2025, with a ribbon cutting scheduled for 9:30 AM. The exhibition will feature 18 participating artists and 32 pieces, including photography, textiles, paintings, and quilts. Installation is planned for October 29.

Following the ribbon cutting, the program will transition into a council.. A request has been made for the Fernandño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians and San Gabriel Band of Mission Indias to perform a song, and Vice Chairperson Mark Villasenor noted he would bring the request back to his tribal council for discussion. The event will continue with a segment honoring the Native American Heritage Month honorees, followed by remarks recognizing tribal firefighters.

11.4 LANAIC Bylaws Ad Hoc Committee

There are no updates from the Bylaws Ad Hoc Committee

Commissioner General Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Commissioner Rudy Ortega Jr. was invited in his Tribal President capacity to speak at the APA California Conference in Monterey, which brought together policymakers, administrators, and members of the Natural Resources Committee. Commissioner Ortega shared that the panel he spoke on had an audience of 300 people. He also share that he helped announce Proposition 4 funding, which will support enhancements to city parks.

In addition to the funding announcement, the event focused on advancing policies related to land acknowledgment and strengthening relationships with tribes and local governments. The broader goal was to explore how government entities can better support Native communities.

Announcements/Future Agenda Items

Commissioner Rene' Williams encouraged the Native community to participate in the upcoming election and exercise their right to vote. Commissioner Mona Morales Recalde announced that the San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians will be partnering with United American Indian Involvement, Inc. to host a Native Market on December 6 and that a call for vendors will be release soon.

Commission Adjournment

Vice Chairperson Mark Villasenor announced that the next LANAIC meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 18, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. in the Hall of Administration, Room 372, located at 500 W. Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 P.M.



2026-2027 Executive Committee Nominations

Chairperson

- Mark Villasenor
- Andrea Garcia
- Bryce Lewis-Smith

Vice Chairperson

- Mark Villasenor
- Bryce Lewis-Smith
- Mona Morales Recalde

Treasurer

- Rene' Williams
- Denise Escoto
- Bryce Lewis-Smith
- Mona Morales Recalde

Secretary

- Caroline Bhalla
- Bryce Lewis-Smith

FY2024-2025 Annual Report

DRAFT



Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission
500 W. Temple Street, B-79-2
Los Angeles, CA 90012
LANAIC.lacounty.gov | (213) 738-3241

The County of Los Angeles recognizes that we occupy land originally and still inhabited and cared for by the Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh, and Chumash Peoples. We honor and pay respect to their elders and descendants — past, present, and emerging — as they continue their stewardship of these lands and waters. We acknowledge that settler colonization resulted in land seizure, disease, subjugation, slavery, relocation, broken promises, genocide, and multigenerational trauma. This acknowledgment demonstrates our responsibility and commitment to truth, healing, and reconciliation and to elevating the stories, culture, and community of the original inhabitants of Los Angeles County. We are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on these ancestral lands. We are dedicated to growing and sustaining relationships with Native peoples and local tribal governments, including (in no particular order) the

Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians

Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council

Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians

Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation

San Manuel Band of Mission Indians

San Fernando Band of Mission Indians

LANAIC Roster (2025)

Chairperson Shawn Imitates-Dog, Lakota, Community Elected
Vice Chairperson Mark Villasenor, Fernandño Tataviam, Mayoral Appointee
Secretary Bryce Lewis-Smith, Citizen Potawatomi Nation, Mayoral Appointee
Treasurer Denise Escoto, Northern Cheyenne, Community Elected
Caroline Bhalla, Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin, Second Supervisorial District
Appointee
Chrissie Castro, Navajo, Mayoral Appointee
Andrea N. Garcia, M.D., Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, Mayoral Appointee
Vivian Garcia, Cherokee, Mayoral Appointee
Dawn Jackson, Saginaw Chippewa, Community Elected
Mona Morales Recalde, Gabrieleno Tongva, Community Elected
John Only A Chief, Pawnee Nation, Community Elected
Rudy Ortega Jr., Fernandño Tataviam, Third Supervisorial District Appointee
Ted Tenorio, Tiguana Nation, First Supervisorial District Appointee
Rich Toyon, Acjachemen, Fifth District Appointee
Rene' Williams, Colville Tribes, Fourth Supervisorial District Appointee

LANAIC Roster (2024)

Chairperson Shawn Imitates-Dog, Lakota, Community Elected
Vice Chairperson Mark Villasenor, Fernandño Tataviam, Mayoral Appointee
Secretary Bryce Lewis-Smith, Citizen Potawatomi Nation, Mayoral Appointee
Treasurer Denise Escoto, Northern Cheyenne, Community Elected
Caroline Bhalla, Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin, Second Supervisorial District
Appointee
Chrissie Castro, Navajo, Mayoral Appointee
Andrea N. Garcia, M.D., Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, Mayoral Appointee
Vivian Garcia, Cherokee, Mayoral Appointee
Dawn Jackson, Saginaw Chippewa, Community Elected
Mona Morales Recalde, Gabrieleno Tongva, Community Elected
John Only A Chief, Pawnee Nation, Community Elected
Rudy Ortega Jr., Fernandño Tataviam, Third Supervisorial District Appointee
Ted Tenorio, Tiguana Nation, First Supervisorial District Appointee
Rich Toyon, Acjachemen, Fifth District Appointee
Rene' Williams, Colville Tribes, Fourth Supervisorial District Appointee

Staff

Alexandra Valdes, Executive Director
Julien Tan, Administrative Manager

Mission Statement

The primary purpose of the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) is to improve the health and well-being of the Los Angeles American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) community. It accomplishes its purpose through many strategies, including but not limited to increasing the acquisition of funding resources available to the AIAN community, advocating for policy that will improve the health and well-being of AIANs, and gathering and disseminating information about AIANs in Los Angeles County. In performing these functions, the Commission will represent the interests and concerns of AIAN of all tribal and cultural backgrounds, religious convictions, gender identities, and social circumstances.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

As an advisory Commission to the Board of Supervisors, the LANAIC understands that it is charged with ensuring equity, diversity, and inclusion among the constituents it serves.

The LANAIC strives to create an environment at all meetings that allows members, public, and stakeholders to share and express openly their ideas, opinions, and beliefs. This is done so by the LANAIC opening meetings with an invocation, personal introductions by the Commissioners, and with the Chair inviting the public and guests to introduce themselves. This approach creates a welcoming, respectful, and inclusive environment.

Duties & Responsibilities

The Commission interprets Ordinance 11409 § 3.42.110 to mean that the duties and functions of the Commission are to:

- 1.** Promote the health and well-being of AIAN in Los Angeles.
- 2.** To advocate for the development of funding resources and programs to serve urban AIANs and AIAN organizations.
- 3.** To advocate legislation and policy favorable to urban AIANs;
- 4.** To research, prepare, and disseminate information about AIAN affairs, including but not limited to collaboration with federal, state, and local agencies.
- 5.** To advise and collaborate with non-AIAN community organizations and private agencies working for the concerns of AIAN people.
- 6.** To assist and coordinate collaboration among federal, state, county, and city agencies, and with AIAN agencies and organizations.
- 7.** To foster pride among AIANs and raise visibility of AIAN culture among Los Angeles City and County residents.

8. To educate the public about the accurate history and contemporary issues of Tribes in Los Angeles and California, and center Los Angeles Tribes and Tribal Members.
9. To engage and understand by means of conferences and public hearings conditions which affect the health and well-being of AIANs.
10. To develop recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, Mayor, and City Council that address the health and well-being of AIANs in Los Angeles.
11. To advise the Board of Supervisors, the Mayor, the City Council, and the departments and agencies of these respective governments, and/or other organizations and institutions on matters involving the health and well-being of AIANs in Los Angeles.

Historical Background

On June 25, 1976, Los Angeles County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn and City of Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley signed an ordinance establishing the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) at the Los Angeles Civic Mall, which is now Grand Park. The establishment of the LANAIC came at the advocacy efforts of the City and County's American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) communities. For nearly 50 years, the LANAIC has uplifted and advocated for the concerns and needs of the AIAN community, the largest of any county in the U.S. The LANAIC is comprised of five members appointed by the LA County Board of Supervisors, five members appointed by the Mayor of the City of Los Angeles, and five members elected by Los Angeles County's AIAN community through elections held every 4 years by the LANAIC.

In the early 1990s, the Board of Supervisors established the LANAIC's Self Governance Board (LANAIC SGB). The LANAIC SGB is an eight-member body that advises and supports the Board of Supervisors administering the Community Services Block Grant Native American Set-aside (CSAIBG) program. CSAIBG funding is contracted to subrecipient agencies to provide critical poverty-alleviating services to AIAN individuals and families living at or below 200% Federal Poverty Line. In 2021, the CSAIBG dollars were successfully leveraged to secure \$500,000 in annual County Care First Community Investment funding for FY 21-22, FY 22-23, and FY 23-24 to address homelessness and housing insecurity experienced by the AIAN population. In addition to administering programs that provide direct services to LAC residents, the work of the LANAIC has expanded to meet the evolving directives and priorities of the Board of Supervisors and the City of LA's Mayor and City Council.

Since 1976, the LANAIC and the LANAIC SGB have worked on a variety of projects and achieved many accomplishments. Below are some of the past accomplishments of the two bodies in chronological order:

June 20, 1977 – The LANAIC supported the creation of the Indian Health Services Liaison Officer in the County Department of Health Services.

March 6, 1988 – Steven L. A. Stallings, Chairperson of the LANAIC, was quoted in the Los Angeles Times' article, "Back to Their Roots for Retirement: Aging Indians Finding They Can Go Home Again".

1993 – The LANAIC SGB, in partnership with the County Board of Supervisors, became an eligible Community Action Agency (CAA) and began receiving and administering Community Service Block Grant Native American set aside funds (CSAIBG).

April 15, 2002 – The LANAIC supported AB-2115, a bill to ban all Native American mascots from public schools in California.

June 9, 2004 - The LANAIC supported AB-858 California Racial Mascots Act: athletic team names and mascots.

September 30, 2004 – The LANAIC supported SB-18 Traditional tribal cultural places.

2006 – The City of Los Angeles established November as American Indian Heritage Month and began partnering with the LANAIC to develop programming for the month.

2009 to 2021– The LANAIC partnered with San Manuel Band of Mission Indians to provide tickets for Native youth and their families to attend professional sports Native American Heritage Appreciation Nights.

March 2012 – The LANAIC discovered that Native youth were being administered psychotropic medication while in foster care without the knowledge of their tribe or relatives and successfully fought to stop the practice in Los Angeles County. The LANAIC then worked with national Native organizations to have the Psychotropic Medication to American Indian Youth amendment added to the Indian Child Welfare Act.

2012 – 2016 – The LANAIC, in partnership with UCLA's American Indian Studies Center, the California Wellness Foundation, and the American Indian Community Council (AICC), developed a series of policy briefs that analyzed and reported on 2010 US Census data. These policy briefs built upon this past work and included a comparative study of the Los Angeles AIAN population trends. All four of the policy briefs addressed the Status of AIAN in Los Angeles, analyzing (1) population changes; (2) economic indicators post-Great Recession; (3) health insurance coverage; and (4) labor. The LANAIC hosted the Urban Indian Roundtable to discuss the findings of the policy briefs.

November 2014 – The LANAIC was heavily involved in the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education (WHIAIANE) – the first-ever school environment listening tour.

2015 – The LANAIC advocated against the sainthood of Junipero Serra.

November 13, 2015 – The City of Los Angeles Arts, Parks, and River Committee passed Indigenous Peoples Day (Motion File No. 15-1343)

November 13, 2015 – The City of Los Angeles Arts, Parks, and River Committee passed the Native American Locations/Report on History and Cultural Impact (Motion File No. 15-1341)

September 2016 – The LANAIC helped organize the community in support of the Los Angeles City Council motion to stand with the Standing Rock Sioux Nation and against the Dakota Access Pipeline project. The LANAIC actively worked with and supported the Oglala and Sicangu Lakota, and other successful efforts to convince then President Obama of the Pipeline's dangers.

October 5, 2016 – With the strong urging and vocal support of the LANAIC, including testifying at several meetings, the County of Los Angeles Commission on Human Relations voted to replace Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day.

November 2016 - The LANAIC hosted the First Annual LANAIC Pow Wow at Grand Park.

August 30, 2017– With the strong urging and vocal support of the LANAIC, including testifying at several hearings, the Los Angeles City Council passed a motion creating Indigenous Peoples Day as an official City holiday, to be observed on the second Monday of each October.

October 3, 2017 – With the strong urging and vocal support of the LANAIC, including testifying at several hearings, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors passed a motion removing Columbus Day as an official County holiday and replacing it with Indigenous Peoples Day.

November 2017 - The LANAIC hosted the 2nd Annual LANAIC Pow Wow at Grand Park.

September 25, 2018 - The LANAIC hosted the Community Forum on Native American Homelessness at the California Endowment.

October 8, 2018 - The City and County of Los Angeles celebrated the inaugural Indigenous Peoples Day (IPD) as a recognized City and County holiday in Los Angeles, replacing Columbus Day. The LANAIC, in partnership with Council Member Mitch O'Farrell, planned, coordinated, and executed the inaugural celebration at Grand Park and City Hall.

November 10, 2018 – The Columbus statue located in Grand Park was removed. The removal of the statue was the result of sustained action by the Los Angeles City and County's Native American and Indigenous communities.

November 17, 2018 - The LANAIC hosted the 3rd Annual LANAIC Pow Wow at Grand Park.

December 2018 – The LANAIC conducted key informant interviews with community members with lived homeless experience.

Spring 2019 - The LANAIC SGB collaborated with the Urban Indian Health Institute (UIHI) to develop and administer two community needs assessment survey tools for Los Angeles County's AIAN community and service providers.

March 9, 2019 – The LANAIC co-sponsored the Center for Health Equity's American Indian and Alaska Native Community in Focus event on March 9, 2019, at the California State University, Long Beach.

March 14, 2019 - In partnership with several community-based and local government organizations, the LANAIC released a preliminary report entitled Understanding Native American Homelessness in Los Angeles.

March 2019 – The LANAIC launched the AIAN Homelessness Portal on the LANAIC website.

May 13, 2019 - The LANAIC co-sponsored the LA County Chief Sustainability Office's Tribal & Indigenous Communities Feedback Session.

June 1, 2019 - The LANAIC co-sponsored the LA River Master Plan's Native American Community Discussion.

October 13, 2019 – The LANAIC, in partnership with Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell planned, coordinated, and executed the Second Annual Indigenous Peoples Day celebration at Grand Park and LA City Hall. The annual event was an opportunity to uplift the true history of the Los Angeles Basin and push back against the erasure of Indigenous Peoples, including AIAN peoples.

November 2019 – In partnership with the Office of Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell, the LANAIC produced the 3rd Annual Native American Heritage Month Bridge Gallery. The 2019 gallery featured eight professional LA based community artists from tribes including Kumeyaay, Apache, Ojibwe, Tejon and Chehallis. Commissioner and artist Dawn Jackson curated the event.

November 1, 2019 – The LANAIC and Councilmember O'Farrell jointly recognized the 2019 Native American Heritage Month honorees at Los Angeles City Hall:

- Spirit of Tradition Saginaw Grant (Sac and Fox Nation)
- Spirit of Creativity Randy Reinholz (Choctaw)
- Spirit of Community Omerlene Thompson (Gila River)

November 5, 2019 – The County Board of Supervisors honored the 2019 NAHM honorees in a presentation given by Supervisor Solis in the Board Room.

November 16, 2019 – The LANAIC hosted the 4th Annual LANAIC Pow Wow at Grand Park.

January 2020 – LANAIC Homelessness Ad hoc Committee Chair Commissioner Dr. Andrea Garcia presented on the LANAIC's homelessness work at a workshop at the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) conference.

March 23, 2020 – In partnership with several AIAN community-based organizations, the LANAIC hosted a community webinar on COVID-19 that was livestreamed to Facebook. As a result of this positive effort, participating organizations expressed an interest to continue to meet in order to work in coordination throughout the duration of the pandemic. As a result, the LANAIC created the ad hoc committee: Natives in LA COVID Response Working Group.

March 23, 2020 – The Natives in LA COVID Response Working Group began meeting every other week throughout the pandemic and, through a collective effort, has supported LAC's AIAN community in many ways, including food and essential items distributions, a video PSA, culturally supportive educational resources, advocacy efforts, two pop-up vaccine events, and numerous partnerships and linkages to resources.

April 2020 – The LANAIC created and launched a COVID Resources page on the LANAIC website (<https://lanaic.lacounty.gov/covid-19-resources/>). The page shares resources broken down by offerings at AIAN Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Housing & Utilities, Education & Childcare, Health & Mental Health, Employees & Employers, and Food.

April 13, 2020 - The LANAIC submitted a letter of support to the Board of Supervisors for the Ensuring Collection of Full Racial and Ethnic Data of COVID-19 Patients throughout Los Angeles County Board Motion. Included in the letter was a set of recommendations advocating for proper data collection for the AIAN community to ensure the disparate effects that COVID-19 was having on the AIAN community were accurately captured. The LANAIC's letter of support and set of recommendations were referenced and included in the Department of Public Health's report back to the Board entitled Report on LA County COVID-19 Data Disaggregated by Race and Ethnicity.

June 2020 – LANAIC Homelessness Ad hoc Committee Chair Commissioner Dr. Andrea Garcia presented on the LANAIC's homelessness work at a webinar presentation in conjunction with the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) and the National Coalition to End Urban Indigenous Homelessness.

July 2020 – FNX, First Nations Experience, aired the AIAN COVID PSA that the LANAIC and Natives in LA COVID Response Working Group produced.

August 2020 – KABC7 aired the AIAN COVID PSA that the LANAIC and Natives in LA COVID Response Working Group produced.

August 18, 2020 - In partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, the LA City Mayor's Office, and Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell, the LANAIC hosted the Native American Connections Webinar. The webinar was an opportunity for

community members and City and County officials to learn from Native American Connections (NAC) and the ways in which they work with their local Continuum of Care.

September 25, 2020 - In partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, the LA City Mayor's Office, and Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell, the LANAIC hosted the second Native American housing webinar. This webinar served as an opportunity for community members and City and County officials to learn from Chief Seattle Club and the ways in which they have developed culturally supportive housing in Seattle, WA.

October 10, 2020 - In observance of Indigenous Peoples Day 2020, the LANAIC partnered with the LA County Library and the LA County Department of Arts & Culture to host a virtual reading and discussion of Waa'aka': The Bird Who Fell in Love with the Sun with author Cindi Alvitre (Tongva) and illustrator Carly Lake.

October 12, 2020 - The LANAIC hosted a virtual Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration. The virtual event featured remarks from Chairwoman Chrissie Castro (Navajo) and LA City Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell (Wyandotte), a land acknowledgement from Julia Bogany (Tongva), a Tataviam welcome song from Vice Chairperson Rudy Ortega Jr. and his son Noe, presentations from Marcos Aguilar (Masewalli Mexicano), Commissioner Dr. Andrea Garcia (Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara), and Asena Filihia (Tongan), and a musical performance by singer Kelly Caballero (Tongva).

November 2020 – The LANAIC, the Board of Supervisors, and LA City Councilmember O'Farrell jointly recognized the 2020 Native American Heritage Month honorees during a virtual ceremony streamed to Facebook on November 7, 2020. The ceremony was part of a larger NAHM 2-part virtual program. The second virtual was streamed live to Facebook on November 21, 2020.

- Julia Bogany (Tongva) - Spirit of Tradition
- Bird Runningwater (Cheyenne and Mescalero Apache) - Spirit of Creativity
- Keith Vielle (Blackfeet) - Spirit of Community

November 21, 2020 – January 4, 2021 - Tongva artist Mercedes Dorame created a temporary art installation in Grand Park, to coincide with the programming of Memory is in the Present, a program supported by the LANAIC and Department of Arts & Culture partnership. The artwork was available for viewing from November 21, 2020 – January 4, 2021, and was located in the second block of the park between Grand Ave and Hill Street.

Spring 2021 - The Executive Director of the LANAIC and the LANAIC SGB submitted a proposal for Measure J funding to enhance and expand housing insecurity and homelessness services provided through the Community Services Block Grant Native American Set-Aside (CSAIBG) funds program. As a result of strong community advocacy, the proposal for \$500,000 was included in the Measure J Re-Imagine LA

Advisory Committee: Spending Plan Recommendations for Year One (Fiscal Year 2021-2022).

May 1, 2021 – The LANAIC and Natives in LA COVID Response Working Group partnered with Kedren Health Centers and Supervisor Solis to host the first of two pop-up vaccine events at LA State Historic Park. The events were targeted at LAC's AIAN and Indigenous communities and provided a safe and supportive environment to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Food boxes, diapers, wipes, and other items were distributed at the event as well. Two local Native artists performed during the event.

May 29, 2021 – The LANAIC and Natives in LA COVID Response Working Group partnered with Kedren Health Centers and Supervisor Solis to host the second of two pop-up vaccine events at LA State Historic Park. The events were targeted at LAC's AIAN and Indigenous communities and provided a safe and supportive environment to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Food boxes, diapers, wipes, and other items were distributed at the event as well.

October 5, 2021 – The Board of Supervisors adopted the Indigenous Peoples Day 2021 - Development of Land Acknowledgement and Land Access Policies motion. The motion secured funding to support the participation, knowledge, and emotional and mental labor of tribal participants throughout a process to develop a Countywide land acknowledgment policy, protocol, and toolkit, and document harms inflicted by the County on local tribes and people. The funding also supported the hiring of a facilitator and project management team. The LANAIC, in partnership with the Department of Arts & Culture, ran a competitive RFP process to procure a consultant team. The County entered into an agreement with a consultant on February 3, 2022, to facilitate engagement with tribal leaders and members of the AIAN community to complete this work.

October 2021 – The LANAIC collaborated with the LA County Library's Cultural Resources Centers (American Indian, Asian Pacific, Black, and Chicano) and Pride Committee to develop Indigenous Peoples' Day booklists for the education and enjoyment of LAC residents. The intent of the four booklists (Kids, Teens, Adults & Adults with a focus on California Native Peoples) was to encourage people to consider and rethink their assumptions about Indigenous history and literature and remind them about the power of story to create social and personal change (Celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day – LA County Library).

October 14, 2021 & January 26, 2022 - In June 2021, the Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted the Proclaim June 25, 2021 as the 45th Anniversary of the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission and Envision the Commission's Future motion. The motion directed the LANAIC to work with DHR to develop a multi-part DIALogue series to increase awareness and understanding of County employees of the LAC AIAN population.

The LANAIC Executive Director produced the following two events that were video recorded and are available to all County staff via LearningNet: Combating Erasure: A Conversation with Native American Leaders (October 14, 2021) and Understanding the Indian Child Welfare Act (January 26, 2022).

November 2021 - In 2021, the LANAIC selected three NAHM honorees on behalf of the City and County:

- Angie Behrens (Gabieleno Tongva) - Spirit of Tradition
- Tazbah Rose Chavez (Nüümü, Diné and San Carlos Apache) - Spirit of Creativity
- Tracy M. Ball (Diné) - Spirit of Community

The LANAIC, the Board of Supervisors, and LA City Councilmember O'Farrell jointly recognized the 2021 NAHM honorees during a virtual ceremony streamed to Facebook on November 13, 2021. The virtual program included host Krista Hazelwood (Seminole), a welcome song and land welcoming given by Rudy Ortega Jr. (Fernandeno Tataviam) and Mark Villasenor (Fernandeno Tataviam), remarks on the impact of the COVID pandemic on LA's AIAN community delivered by Commissioner Dr. Andrea Garcia (Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara), an acknowledgement of the sacrifices made by Native Veterans provided by Keith Vielle (Blackfeet), the 2021 NAHM honoree program presented by Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell (Wyandotte) which included NAHM Honoree acceptance videos, and videos from numerous elected officials including Board Supervisors Hilda Solis, Holly Mitchell, Sheila Kuehl, Janice Hahn and Kathryn Barger.

January 2022 – The LANAIC and LANAIC SGB transferred from the former Department of Workforce Development, Aging & Community Services to the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors.

February 2022 – April 2023 - The LANAIC was selected by the Department of Arts & Culture as the 2022 host department for the 2022 Creative Strategist-Artist in Residence (Creative Strategist). Jacob Pratt (Dakota) was selected through a competitive solicitation process and began his residency with the LANAIC in February 2022. His residency concluded in April 2023.

During the first phase of his residency, Jacob embarked on a listening tour, meeting with some of the LANAIC's 15 commissioners and others in the AIAN community. Through these conversations, an idea began to take shape: to use film as a medium to raise awareness and celebrate the diversity of the Native American community in LA County.

On April 22, 2023, Jacob debuted his film, Erasure, on the Los Angeles City College campus.

June 21, 2022 - On June 21, 2022 the LANAIC Executive Director submitted and distributed the Report Back on Proclaim June 25, 2021, As The 45th Anniversary Of The Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission And Envision The Commission's Future And Acknowledge And Apologize For The Historic Mistreatment Of California Native Americans By Los Angeles County (Item No. 61-A, Agenda Of June 22, 2021, And Item No. 16, Agenda Of July 13, 2021).

August 31, 2022 - The California Legislature approved passage of ACR 177 (Bloom/Ramos), removing the "Christopher Columbus" designation on the California segment of the I-10, reversing a previous legislative resolution adopted in 1976. The resolution reflects another significant state and local effort to promote cultural sensitivity.

The resolution requires that if there are any efforts to replace the removed signage, these efforts should involve public input and feedback, including input and participation from the City of Los Angeles, the County of Los Angeles, and the LANAIC.

On October 13, 2020 the County Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted a motion directing the Chief Executive Office, in partnership with the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission and the Department of Public Works to collaborate with County partners in the state legislature and the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) for the removal of the Christopher Columbus Transcontinental Highway designation of the Interstate-10 (I-10) freeway and any signage.

October 2022 – The LANAIC and LANAIC SGB transferred from the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors to the Department of Arts and Culture.

October 10, 2022 - The LANAIC, in partnership with Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell, hosted the 2022 Indigenous Peoples Day celebration at Grand Park. The 4-hour celebration featured performances by the Asosal Ballet Folklorico de El Salvador, Manitoba Metis Federation Red River Metis Jiggers & Fiddlers, Intertribal Dancers, and OneDrumm, screenings of Saging the World, the trailer of Spirit Rangers and One World (We Are One), a vendor marketplace, and food trucks.

October 18, 2022 - The LANAIC acted to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that they adopt the draft land acknowledgment statement developed by the Tribal Planning Group. The Board of Supervisors adopted the land acknowledgment on November 1, 2023.

November 2022 - The LANAIC selected two 2022 Native American Heritage Month (NAHM) honorees. The LA City Council and the LA County Board of Supervisors also honored the NAHM honorees.

- The Phoenix Family (Tohono O'odham) - Spirit of Tradition
- Dr. Carrie Johnson (Wahpeton Dakota) - Spirit of Community

The LA County Board of Supervisors proclaimed November NAHM via Board Motion at their November 1, 2022 meeting.

The LANAIC partnered with Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell and the LA City Department of Cultural Affairs (LA DCA) to host a celebration of the 2022 NAHM honorees. The celebration took place at Clockshop on November 17, 2022, and included performances from Raye Zaragoza, LA Pow Wow dancers, and a community reception. The LANAIC also collaborated with the LA DCA to develop a 2022 Native American Heritage Month e-book.

December 6 & 7, 2022 - Every 4 years, the LANAIC holds County-wide elections for the five community-elected seats on the Commission. Elections were held on December 6 and 7, 2022, at three polling sites: the Department of Mental Health American Indian Counseling Center, Pukúu Cultural Community Services, and United American Indian Involvement, Inc. The LANAIC partnered with the Registrar & Recorder/County Clerk to utilize secure ballot boxes.

Eight candidates ran for the five community-elected seats. John Only a Chief, Denise Escoto, Shawn Imitates-Dog, Mona Morales Recalde, and Dawn Jackson were elected to serve four-year terms beginning January 17, 2023.

February 2023 - The LANAIC SGB, in partnership with its home department Arts and Culture, executed a contract with the Center for Non-Profit Management (CNM) to develop a strategic plan. This strategic planning document reflects the work of LANAIC SGB in charting the board's direction for the next 3-4 years by developing its 2023-2026 Strategic Plan. The priorities align with its vision, values, and purpose to address the reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and/or empowerment of people with low incomes to become self-sufficient. The strategic plan also fulfills compliance requirements of CSBG/CSAIBG Organizational Standards Category 6, Strategic Planning.

The 5-month strategic planning process included organizational reviews and planning, strategic planning interviews, and strategic planning sessions with LANAIC SGB members, and the development of strategic plan documents. CNM presented the draft strategic plan to the LANAIC SGB at their June 21, 2023 meeting. The LANAIC SGB took action to adopt the strategic plan at their August 15, 2023 meeting.

March 11, 2023 - The County of Los Angeles issued a pursuit of support for AB1703: California Indian Education Act. In 2022, the LANAIC recommended to the Board of Supervisors, by way of the State Legislative Agenda process, that they adopt a number of policy positions, including "support proposals that promote communication and collaboration between local education agencies and American Indian and Alaska Native tribes." As a result of the adoption of this policy position, the County was able to issue a pursuit of support for AB 1703 and advocate for the bill. AB 1703 was signed into law by Governor Newsom on September 23, 2023.

March 21, 2023 - The LANAIC adopted proposed responses to the Office of Management & Budget's (OMB) request for comments regarding the revision SPD15 - Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and

Ethnicity and requested that Board Chair Janice Hahn transmit a letter to OMB supporting these adopted responses. The Board of Supervisors acted at their April 18, 2023 meeting to send a four-signature letter to OMB expressing Los Angeles County's support of American Indian and Alaska Native data best practices in OMB's Statistical Policy Directive No. 15. The 4-signature letter was transmitted to OMB on April 24, 2023.

March 21, 2023 - The LANAIC acted to recommend that the Board of Supervisors take a supportive position on AB 776 - 210 Interstate Highway Renaming. On April 18, 2023, the Board of Supervisors directed the Chief Executive Office, through the Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations Branch, to advocate in support of Assembly Bill 776, including sending a five-signature letter in support of the bill to Assemblymember Chris Holden. AB 776 was signed into law by Governor Newsom on October 8, 2023.

September 19, 2023 – LA City Mayor Karen Bass attended the monthly LANAIC meeting. This marked the first time a sitting Mayor of LA City attended an LANAIC meeting. During this historic meeting, the LANAIC was able to share about the historical background of the commission, issues facing the American Indian/Alaska Native community, and the current funding, programs, and partnerships.

September 19, 2023 - The LANAIC adopted a letter to the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, requesting a sustainability plan following the end of Watson Consulting Group's contract with the CEO Homelessness Initiative, focused on addressing American Indian and Alaska Native homelessness. Additionally, the LANAIC adopted an AIAN Homelessness Infographic. The infographic was released on February 5, 2024.

September 23, 2023 - The LANAIC, in partnership with the California Legislative Native American Caucus and the California Native Vote Project, held a town hall to raise awareness of AB 1314 Feather Alert at the Los Angeles County Office of Education.

October 2023 - For 2023 Indigenous Peoples' Day (IPD), the LANAIC collaborated with the LA County Library's Cultural Resource Centers (American Indian, Asian Pacific, Black, and Chicano) and Pride Committee to develop IPD booklists for the education and enjoyment of LA County residents.

October 17, 2023 -The LANAIC adopted the content of the "Advancing Indigenous Housing Rights in Los Angeles: International Best Practice and a Legal Framework" report. The designed report was released on August 5, 2024.

October 17, 2023 - The LANAIC adopted FY24-25 budget request letters to the Board of Supervisors and Mayor Bass. The request to the Board included funding for a dedicated position in the CEO Homelessness Initiative to address AIAN homelessness and funding for County Counsel to retain tribal Indian law expertise. The request to Mayor Bass included funding support for the CEO HI position as well as ongoing funding for Indigenous Peoples' Day programming.

November 2023 – The LA City Council and the LA County Board of Supervisors honored the three 2023 NAHM honorees selected by the LANAIC:

- Jimi Castillo (Tongva/Acjachemen) - Spirit of Tradition Posthumous
- Robert Javier (Cherokee/Sac & Fox) - Spirit of Community
- Chris “Spanto” Printup (Cherokee/Sac & Fox) - Spirit of Creativity Posthumous

The LA City Council proclaimed NAHM on November 1, 2023, and honored the NAHM honorees. The in-chambers presentation was followed by a community reception at the forecourt coordinated by the LANAIC. LANAIC also collaborated with the LA City Department of DCA to develop a 2022 Native American Heritage Month e-book.

The LA County Board of Supervisors proclaimed November NAHM via Board Motion at their November 7, 2023 meeting.

November 21, 2023 - The LANAIC adopted a letter to the LA County Homelessness Initiative, making recommendations on how to optimize the continued work to address AIAN Homelessness.

April 16, 2024 - The LANAIC selected *Weaving Together a Community of Traditions, Cultures & Respect* as the 2024 Native American Heritage Month theme to recommend to LA City and LA County.

May 21, 2024 - The LANAIC approved Commissioner Dr. Andrea Garcia to present at the June 13, 2024 County of LA Homelessness Policy Board Deputies Meeting. On June 13, 2024, Commissioner Dr. Garcia presented at the meeting. Her presentation included information on achievements to date and ongoing requests.

May 21, 2024 - The LANAIC took action requesting that the County of Los Angeles Chief Executive Office Legislative Affairs Intergovernmental Affairs (CEO-LAIR) review the proposed recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to oppose HR6859: Gabrielino/Tongva Nation Recognition Act of 2023. At the June 18, 2024 meeting, the LANAIC reviewed and discussed the CEO-LAIR memo on a possible opposition position to HR6589: Gabrielino/Tongva Nation Recognition Act of 2023.

May 21, 2024 - The LANAIC took action to oppose the draft LA City land acknowledgment and recommended that the City request that the State of California Native American Heritage Commission complete proper vetting of documents to identify ancestral tribes within the Los Angeles City geographical area.

May 21, 2024 - The LANAIC adopted a draft letter requesting that the Department of Arts and Culture allocate funding and qualified resources to support the development of a new website for the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission.

June 2024 - The LANAIC partnered with Supervisor Hilda L Solis to bring the *100 Years After the Indian Citizenship Act: The Continuing Struggle to Guarantee Voting Rights to Native Americans* exhibit to Los Angeles County. The traveling exhibit curated by the

American Bar Association Standing Committee on the Law Library of Congress was on display at the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration for two weeks in June 2024. The exhibit helped raise awareness and understanding about this critical part of American history

June 18, 2024 - The LANAIC adopted a letter requesting that the LA City Council designate areas of West Los Angeles Sawtelle as Indigenous Cultural Districts.

DRAFT

FY25-26 Work Plan

Project: 2025 Native American Heritage Month	
Goal/Objective	
Provide recommendations to LA County and LA City on the 2025 Native American Heritage Month theme, NAHM honorees and programming.	
Actions	Deadline
2025 NAHM Planning Ad Hoc Committee Meetings	July 2025-November 2025
Planning Meetings with LA City Councilmember Padilla's Office	July 2025-November 2025
Select the 2025 NAHM Honorees	August 19, 2025
Notify Councilmember Padilla and the LA County Board of Supervisors of the selected 2025 NAHM Honorees	August 20, 2025
Provide LANAIC Chair's Letter to LA City Department of Cultural Affairs for the 2025 NAHM Cultural Guide & Calendar	September 17, 2025
LA City Hall 2025 NAHM Bridge Gallery	November 2025
LA City Council in Chambers NAHM Ceremony & Forecourt Reception	November 7, 2025

Project: Prepare and Submit FY26-27 Budget Request Letters to LA City and LA County	
Purpose: Ensure American Indian and Alaska Native community needs are reflected in the LA County FY26-27 budget and the LA City FY26-27 budget.	
Actions	Deadline
Draft FY26-27 LANAIC Budget Request Letter to Board of Supervisors	September 30, 2025
Draft FY26-27 LANAIC Budget Request Letter to LA City Mayor Karen Bass	September 30, 2025
Discuss draft FY26-27 LANAIC Budget Request Letter to the Board of Supervisors	October 21, 2025
Discuss draft FY26-27 LANAIC Budget Request Letter to LA City Mayor Karen Bass	October 21, 2025
Adopt FY26-27 LANAIC Budget Request Letter to Board of Supervisors	November 18, 2025
Adopt FY26-27 LANAIC Budget Request Letter to LA City Mayor Karen Bass	November 18, 2025
Submit FY26-27 LANAIC Budget Request Letter to Board of Supervisors	November 19, 2025
Submit FY26-27 LANAIC Budget Request Letter to LA City Mayor Karen Bass	November 19, 2025

Project: LANAIC 50 th Anniversary	
Goal/Objective	
Prepare for the 50 th Anniversary of the Commission.	
Actions	Deadline
Determine how to commemorate the 50 th Anniversary of the LANAIC	TBD

Project: Review and Update LANAIC and LANAIC SGB Bylaws	
Purpose: Ensure that LANAIC and LANAIC SGB Bylaws are in alignment with County policy and State law, and clearly and accurately represent the Commission's role, function, and processes.	
Actions	Deadline
County Counsel Review of Revised LANAIC and LANAIC SGB Bylaws	TBD
Commission Adoption of Revised Bylaws	TBD
LANAIC SGB Adoption of Revised Bylaws	TBD
Submission of Adopted LANAIC Bylaws to the State of California Department of Community Services & Development.	TBD

Project: American Indian and Alaska Native Homelessness Advocacy

Purpose: Increase LA County and LA City resources to address American Indian and Alaska Native homelessness in LA County.

Actions	Deadline
Adopt AIAN Community Recommendations 1-Pager	October 21, 2025
Develop a draft FY25-26 advocacy plan including proposed letters to elected officials and presentations	TBD
Adopt draft FY25-26 advocacy plan	TBD

DRAFT

FY24-25 Accomplishments

Peter Pan at the Pantages

The LANAIC collaborated with Supervisor Lindsay Horvath and the Pantages Theater to host a Native American community night for playwright Larissa FastHorse's (Sicangu Lakota) *Peter Pan* on July 22, 2024. The event began with a reception celebrating Ms. FastHorse.

2024 Indigenous Peoples' Day

The Department of Arts and Culture, the home department of the LANAIC, partnered with the Music Center (TMC) to program a 2-day Indigenous Peoples Day celebration. TMC engaged The Chapter House, a female Native led non-profit to produce the event. The event entitled, *The Chapter House Indigenous Peoples' Day Party*, created a space on two Saturdays in October 2024 for cultural affirmation and joy among the county's Indigenous communities to foster greater awareness, respect, and understanding of the ongoing cultural contributions of Indigenous people among Los Angeles County residents.

FY25-26 Budget Request Letters

At the October 15, 2024 meeting, the LANAIC adopted FY24-25 budget request letters to the Board of Supervisors and Mayor Bass. The request to the Board included funding to stand up the County Office of Tribal Affairs and for a dedicated position in the CEO Homelessness Initiative to address AIAN homelessness. Additionally, the letter to the Board included requests for the County to allocate funding to procure a training focused on building the understanding of the County's workforce on the unique history and issues facing Native American people in LA, and for the development of a new LANAIC website. The request to Mayor Bass included funding support for the CEO HI position as well as ongoing funding for a dedicated full-time City staff position and an increase to the annual City contribution to the LANIAC. Additionally, the letter to the mayor included requests for ongoing funding to support an annual Native American Heritage Month reception as well as for Indigenous Peoples Day programming.

2024 Native American Heritage Month

LA City Council and the LA County Board of Supervisors honored the three 2024 NAHM honorees selected by the LANAIC:

- Chief Anthony Morales (Gabrieleno Tongva) - Spirit of Tradition
- Cynthia Ruiz (Cherokee) - Spirit of Community
- Kenny Ramos (Barona Band of Mission Indians) - Spirit of Creativity

The LA City Council proclaimed NAHM on November 22, 2024, and honored the NAHM honorees. The in-chambers presentation was followed by a community reception at the LA City forecourt coordinated by the LANAIC. The LANAIC also provided materials to

the LA City Department of Cultural Affairs for the 2024 NAHM Cultural Guide & Calendar.

At the September 17, 2024 meeting, the LANAIC adopted a letter to Supervisor Hilda Solis requesting free access for Native American residents to County parks and museums during 2024 Native American Heritage Month. The LA County Board of Supervisors proclaimed November 2024 NAHM via Board Motion at their October 22, 2024 meeting and included the following directive - direct the Natural History Museum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Department of Beaches and Harbors, Department of Parks and Recreation, County Library, and other relevant Departments to, in coordination with the Anti-Racism, Diversity and Inclusion (ARDI) Initiative, provide free access for one day on or about, and in celebration of, Native American Heritage Month, to appropriate facilities (such as museums and beach parking) for American Indian and Alaska Native community members.

LANAIC Retreat

On Saturday, January 25, 2025, the LANAIC held a day-long planning retreat at the Natural History Museum. Throughout the day, the LANAIC discussed priorities and developed a 2025 work plan.

Community Listening Session

On Saturday, February 15, 2025, the LANAIC hosted a listening session at the Autry Museum of the West for AIAN community members. The purpose of the listening session was for community members to share how they had been impacted by the Eaton and Palisades fires, as well as questions and concerns they have about the new Federal administration. 19 community members participated. Participants were divided into 3 small groups and participated in small group discussions facilitated by LANAIC Commissioners. The following three questions were discussed:

1. How are you impacted by the wildfires?
2. What are your concerns about the federal executive orders and policy changes?
3. What support do you need?

At the March 18, 2025 LANAIC meeting, the body adopted synthesized notes from the community listening session as well as accompanying memos to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) and Mayor Karen Bass. These documents were transmitted via email to the BOS and Mayor Bass on March 19.

At the May 20, 2025 LANAIC meeting, the body adopted letters to the BOS and Mayor Bass that included formal recommendations, grounded in community reflections shared at the January 25, 2025 Community Listening Session, as well as the findings of *A Report on Harms Against Local Tribes* (January 2023), developed in partnership with five local California Native American Tribes. The recommendations were rooted in a

shared goal to ensure the City and the County's policies, practices, and partnerships respect tribal sovereignty.

2025 Native American Heritage Month

At the April 15, 2025 meeting, the LANAIC selected *Firekeepers: Honoring Tribal Firefighters, Indigenous Stewardship, and Future Ancestors* as the 2025 Native American Heritage Month theme to recommend to LA City and LA County.

Addressing AIAN Homelessness

Throughout FY24-25, the LANAIC continued to advocate to City and County elected officials to dedicate resources and funding to adequately address the growing homelessness crisis impacting the AIAN community.

On August 5, 2024, the LANAIC released the *Advancing Indigenous Housing Rights in Los Angeles: International Best Practice and a Legal Framework* report. The report release included social media assets, a website posting, and formal communications to elected officials.

As mentioned above at the October 15, 2024 meeting, the LANAIC adopted FY25-26 budget request letters to the BOS and Mayor Karen Bass, which included funding requests for a full-time AIAN position in the County's CEO HI.

At the October 15, 2024 meeting, the LANAIC approved the body cohosting a virtual American Indian and Alaska Native Homelessness research symposium on November 21, 2024, in partnership with the USC Homelessness Prevention Institute.

At the January 25, 2025 LANAIC meeting, the body approved sunsetting the Homelessness Committee and realigning the priority initiative back into the regular meeting of the LANAIC. The structural move was also symbolic as it affirmed the body's commitment to addressing AIAN homelessness.

LANAIC Self Governance Board

Public Law 105-285 (the CSBG Act) and the California Government Code require that the State of California Department of Community Services & Development (CSD) secure a Community Action Plan (CAP), including a Community Needs Assessment (CNA) from each agency that receives CSBG funding.

Section 676(b)(11) of the CSBG Act directs that receipt of a CAP is a condition to receive funding. Section 12747(a) of the California Government Code requires the CAP to assess poverty-related needs, available resources, feasible goals, and strategies that yield program priorities consistent with standards of effectiveness established for the program.

To inform the 2026-2027 Community Action Plan, the LANAIC Self Governance Board (LANAIC SGB) developed an updated Community Needs Assessment survey tool in the

Spring of 2024 and began disseminating the survey in July 2024. The web-based survey remained open through January 2025. The survey findings, in addition to other reports and materials, informed the draft CAP/CNA that was shared at a Community Hearing at LA City College on Saturday, May 17, 2025.

The LANAIC SGB adopted the 2026-2027 CAP/CNA on July 15, 2025, and it was transmitted via email on July 16, 2025, to the State of California Department of Community Services & Development (CSD). CSD formally accepted the 2026-2027 CAP/CNA on August 22, 2025.

DRAFT

Ongoing-Long Term Projects

- Advocating for the County to establish an Office of Tribal Affairs.
- Advocating for resources to address American Indian and Alaska Native homelessness.

DRAFT



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION

Chairperson
SHAWN IMITATES-DOG
Lakota

Vice Chairperson
MARK VILLASEÑOR
Fernandeño Tataviam

Secretary
BRYCE LEWIS-SMITH
Citizen Potawatomi Nation

Treasurer
DENISE ESCOTO
Northern Cheyenne

CAROLINE BHALLA
Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin

CHRISSE CASTRO
Navajo

ANDREA N. GARCIA, M.D.
Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara

VIVIAN GARCIA
Cherokee

DAWN JACKSON
Saginaw Chippewa

MONA MORALES RECALDE
Gabrieleno Tongva

JOHN ONLY A CHIEF
Pawnee Nation

RUDY ORTEGA JR.
Fernandeño Tataviam

TED TENORIO
Tiguan Nation

RICH TOYON
Acjachemen

RENE WILLIAMS
Colville Tribes

ALEXANDRA VALDES
Executive Director

November 18, 2025

LA City Council
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Subject: Call for Native American Representation on the LADWP Board of Commissioners

Dear Mayor Karen Bass,

On behalf of the Los Angeles Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC), we are writing to express our strong support for appointing a Native American representative to the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) Board of Commissioners. This appointment would be an essential step toward honoring the First Peoples of this region and addressing generations of land and water management decisions that have systematically excluded Tribal perspectives.

Los Angeles is home to the largest population of Native Americans in the United States, representing Tribal Nations from across the country and the original Tongva, Kizh, Tataviam, and Chumash peoples of the region. Native communities are an integral part of the cultural, civic, and environmental fabric of Los Angeles. Yet despite this deep presence and long-standing leadership in land stewardship, Native American voices remain largely absent from the City's most consequential decision-making bodies.

For more than a century, LADWP's operations have had profound cultural, ecological, and spiritual impacts on the Tribal Nations, particularly those in the Owens Valley. These impacts have included the loss of land and water rights, the disruption of cultural practices, and the degradation of ancestral homelands. Recognizing this legacy calls for meaningful and concrete actions toward a more just and respectful relationship with Tribal Nations.

Appointing a Native American representative with the necessary expertise in water, land, and environmental governance, a demonstrated understanding of Tribal sovereignty, and a strong, trusted connection the California's Native American communities would bring essential cultural competency and lived experience to decisions that directly affect Tribal resources, rights, and futures.

This role is essential for strengthening trust, ensuring transparent and respectful government-to-government engagement, and advancing the spirit and intent of LADWP's Tribal Engagement Policy.

Appointing a Native American Commissioner that is both highly qualified and deeply rooted in the community is a powerful affirmation that the City of Los Angeles recognizes and honors the First Peoples of this land through action and representation.

Thank you for your leadership and your continued commitment to an inclusive Los Angeles that respects Tribal sovereignty and uplifts Indigenous voices.

Sincerely,

Shawn Imitates-Dog
Chairperson
Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission

cc: LA City Council Members
Solomon Rivera, Deputy Chief of Staff
Anthony Pico, Constituent Correspondence Coordinator



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION

Chairperson
SHAWN IMITATES-DOG
Lakota

Vice Chairperson
MARK VILLASEÑOR
Fernandeño Tataviam

Secretary
BRYCE LEWIS-SMITH
Citizen Potawatomi Nation

Treasurer
DENISE ESCOTO
Northern Cheyenne

CAROLINE BHALLA
Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin

CHRISIE CASTRO
Navajo

ANDREA N. GARCIA, M.D.
Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara

VIVIAN GARCIA
Cherokee

DAWN JACKSON
Saginaw Chippewa

MONA MORALES RECALDE
Gabrieleno Tongva

JOHN ONLY A CHIEF
Pawnee Nation

RUDY ORTEGA JR.
Fernandeño Tataviam

TED TENORIO
Tiguan Nation

RICH TOYON
Acjachemen

RENE WILLIAMS
Colville Tribes

ALEXANDRA VALDES
Executive Director

November 18, 2025

The Honorable Members of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
The Honorable Mayor of the City of Los Angeles

Subject: Advancing Belonging, Visibility, and Cultural Safety for Native American People in Los Angeles

Dear LA County Board of Supervisors and Dear Mayor Bass,

On behalf of the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC), we write to share our recommendations and calls to action following the release of the Native American Homelessness Data Dashboard by our CEO Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative (ARDI) partners, during Native American Heritage Month.

This dashboard affirms what Native leaders, service providers, and community members have long expressed: that Native American people in Los Angeles experience disproportionate rates of homelessness, and yet remain invisible within mainstream systems of care, data, and decision-making.

Earlier this year, through the Native American Housing and Home Summit and the release of the AIAN Housing and Home Community One-Pager, our community clearly articulated that moving from homelessness to home means not only addressing physical shelter but restoring belonging, visibility, and cultural safety.

Community-Informed Priorities and Requests

In alignment with the findings of the dashboard and our ongoing engagement process, the Commission respectfully calls upon City and County leadership to take the following actions:

Representation and Leadership

- Establish formal Native American subject matter expertise on decision-making bodies addressing homelessness and housing, including the LA County Department on Homelessness, the LA County Affordable Housing Solutions Agency, and relevant City housing and cultural commissions.
- Maintain and strengthen the AIAN Coordinator and Deputy Chief Equity Officer roles within the new LA County Department on Homelessness. Continue the work of County's Internal AIAN Working Group on Homelessness, and expand the staffing to include more AIAN expertise in the areas of community engagement, AIAN specific development and policy.

Land and Cultural Belonging

- Fulfill the intent of the 2019 County board motion to assess available property that can be used for a Native American Cultural District and/or culturally supportive housing.
- Engage in government-to-government consultation with the first peoples of these lands—Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh, and Chumash Nations— to discuss proposals, regulations, and policies that may affect tribes, respecting their inherent sovereignty and right to self-determination.

Resource Equity

- Create a dedicated housing matcher and AIAN case conferencing process to improve outcomes for Native people experiencing homelessness.
- Adopt culturally responsive housing policy language in both City and County frameworks to institutionalize equity and accountability.
- Direct funding to local Tribes and Native-led organizations to deliver culturally supportive housing and services.

Call to Partnership

The release of the dashboard provides a renewed opportunity for our City and County to act on long-standing commitments to Native equity. We urge our partners to use this data not only to inform policy, but to invest in self-determination and healing for Native people in Los Angeles.

The LANAIC stands ready to collaborate with your offices to turn these priorities into action. Together, we can make Los Angeles a city and county where Native people are visible, respected, and at home.

With appreciation for your partnership and leadership,

Shawn Imitates-Dog
Chairperson
Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission

Attachments and Links

- LA County Native American Data Dashboard (Nov 2025)
- AIAN Housing and Home Community One-Pager (October 2025)
- Native American Housing and Home Summit Videos (Recap and Keynote)



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION

Chairperson
SHAWN IMITATES-DOG
Lakota

Vice Chairperson
MARK VILLASEÑOR
Fernandeño Tataviam

Secretary
BRYCE LEWIS-SMITH
Citizen Potawatomi Nation

Treasurer
DENISE ESCOTO
Northern Cheyenne

CAROLINE BHALLA
Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin

CHRISSE CASTRO
Navajo

ANDREA N. GARCIA, M.D.
Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara

VIVIAN GARCIA
Cherokee

DAWN JACKSON
Saginaw Chippewa

MONA MORALES RECALDE
Gabrieleno Tongva

JOHN ONLY A CHIEF
Pawnee Nation

RUDY ORTEGA JR.
Fernandeño Tataviam

TED TENORIO
Tiguan Nation

RICH TOYON
Acjachemen

RENE WILLIAMS
Colville Tribes

ALEXANDRA VALDES
Executive Director

October 15, 2024

LA County Board of Supervisors
500 W Temple St
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I am sending this budget request letter on behalf of the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (Commission). We appreciate the opportunity to formalize our budget requests for the County of Los Angeles' FY25-26 budget.

At the May 18, 2021 Commission meeting the body adopted a resolution recommending that the County create an Office of Tribal Affairs. The need for this type of office has been uplifted by local tribal leaders and members of the AIAN community in numerous County-led processes. We request that the Board allocates funding for the creation of this critical office.

On September 20, 2023 the Commission transmitted letters to you and your colleagues on the Board of Supervisor's requesting a sustainability plan to build on the great work of the "Identifying, Supporting, and Serving American Indians and Alaska Natives Who Are at Risk of or Experiencing Homelessness" Board Motion (October 2019). The Commission also uplifted this request in our FY24-25 budget request letter submitted on October 17, 2023. Unfortunately, this critical work remains unfunded. We respectfully request that you support funding in the FY25-26 budget for a dedicated position within CEO Homelessness Initiative to ensure that the County of Los Angeles continues to prioritize fighting American Indian and Alaska Native homelessness.

At the direction of the Board in 2021 we collaborated with the Department of Human Resources to develop a 2 part *Dialogue* event focused on building the awareness and understanding of the American Indian and Alaska Native population by the County workforce. While these webinars were highly attended and effective we believe a Countywide mandated training focused on building the understanding of the County's workforce on unique history and issues facing Native American people in Los Angeles would have a far greater impact. We request that the Board allocates funding and directs CEO to procure the training.

At the May 21, 2024 Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) meeting the Commission unanimously adopted a letter requesting that that the County of Department of Arts and Culture allocate funding and qualified resources to support the development of a new

website for the LANAIC. The LANAIC website is a key communication tool with and the American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) community and public, plays a pivotal role in disseminating information, sharing County and Commission services and events, and highlighting Commission accomplishments. The outdated design and functionality of our current website hinders our ability to effectively communicate with and engage AIAN community members. We request that the Board allocates funding for the Commission to develop a new website.

Thank you for considering the Commission's FY25-26 budget requests.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink on a light-colored background. The signature reads "Shawn Imitates Dog" in a cursive, flowing script.

Shawn Imitates Dog, Chairperson
Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION

Chairperson
SHAWN IMITATES-DOG
Lakota

Vice Chairperson
MARK VILLASEÑOR
Fernandeño Tataviam

Secretary
BRYCE LEWIS-SMITH
Citizen Potawatomi Nation

Treasurer
DENISE ESCOTO
Northern Cheyenne

CAROLINE BHALLA
Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin

CHRISSE CASTRO
Navajo

ANDREA N. GARCIA, M.D.
Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara

VIVIAN GARCIA
Cherokee

DAWN JACKSON
Saginaw Chippewa

MONA MORALES RECALDE
Gabrieleno Tongva

JOHN ONLY A CHIEF
Pawnee Nation

RUDY ORTEGA JR.
Fernandeño Tataviam

TED TENORIO
Tiguan Nation

RICH TOYON
Acjachemen

RENE WILLIAMS
Colville Tribes

ALEXANDRA VALDES
Executive Director

October 15, 2024

Mayor Karen Bass
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mayor Bass,

I am sending this budget request letter on behalf of the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC). We appreciate the opportunity to formalize our budget requests for LA City's FY25-26 budget.

On September 20, 2023 the LANAIC transmitted a letter to you, as well as to the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, requesting a funding plan to build on the great work of the "Identifying, Supporting, and Serving American Indians and Alaska Natives Who Are at Risk of or Experiencing Homelessness" County Board Motion (October 2019). The LANAIC also uplifted this request in our FY24-25 budget request letter submitted to you on October 17, 2023.

Unfortunately, this critical work remains unfunded. We respectfully request that you support funding in the FY25-26 budget to fund, in partnership with the County, a dedicated position within the LA County CEO Homelessness Initiative to ensure that LA City prioritizes fighting American Indian and Alaska Native homelessness.

As shared at our meeting with you on September 19, 2023 and recommended in our FY23-24 budget request letter to you transmitted on October 17, 2023, the work of the LANAIC and its ability to support and advise the City would be greatly improved by the creation of a full-time dedicated City staff position. Currently the LANAIC has two FTE positions, both of which are County positions. We request that you support funding in the FY25-26 budget for an FTE placed within a City department. Additionally, the City's annual contribution to the LANAIC, \$47,000, has remained stagnant for many years. We respectfully ask for an increase in the annual contribution of the City to the LANAIC, as well as participation from your office in renegotiating the MOU between the City and County from the 80s.

Each year \$13,000 of funding is included in the City's budget for the Department of Cultural Affairs to support Native American Heritage Month. Historically, this funding was used to support a reception at City Hall this year however the funding was aligned with the way DCA supports four other heritage months. The annual City Hall NAHM reception has become a beloved community event. We

request ongoing funding to support a NAHM reception. Additionally, given LA City's role in the establishment of Indigenous People's Day (IPD), and former Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell's role in producing large scale IPD events, we think it is important for the Mayor's Office to support an ongoing IPD budgetary line item in the City's budget akin to the dedicated funding for heritage months

Thank you for considering the LANAIC's FY25-26 budget requests.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink on a light yellow background. The signature reads "Shawn Imitates Dog" in a cursive script.

Shawn Imitates Dog, Chairperson
Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission